Issue of spectrum

1810. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Department of Telecommunications has written to Prime Minister on the issue of auction of spectrum;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that some foreign firms including Rookie Telecom and S. Tel have offered voluntarily to pay Rs. 6,000 crore to DoT for allocation of spectrum;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the reasons that Government do not want to auction spectrum to telecom operators?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Communications have been sent to Prime Minister on issues related to licencing and allocation of spectrum aspects which includes, among others, licensing procedures, enhancement of subscribers linked spectrum allocation criteria, spectrum charges, use of dual technology by telecom service providers etc.

(c) and (d) M/s. S. Tel Ltd. in their letter have stated among others, that "S. Tel is of the view that the policy that was evolved when the industry was at its, will not serve the public purpose now, when the industry is among the most advanced. Consistent with its knowledge and understanding of the business of telecom and the high value of spectrum, S. Tel comes forward voluntarily to pay additional revenue share to the extent of Rs. 6000 crores to the DoT, over and above the spectrum charges revenue share payable as per the existing policy, over a period of 10 years from the date of the spectrum allotment. This will bring into effect of prioritization model, which will fully subserve the larger public interest."

(e) Taking into account the TRAI recommendations, the Government has decided not to auction the spectrum for 2G services at present and to grant new Unified Access Services (UAS) Licences as per the existing guidelines.

Plan for network of communication technology

1811. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any strategy or action plan to connect the nation with a network of communication technologies using optic fibre and wireless connections and providing facility to interact in 22 local languages has been launched; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) The Government of India, Department of Information Technology has not launched any specific strategy or action plan to connect the nation with a network of communication technologies using optic fibre and wireless connection and providing facility to interact in 22 local languages has been launched.

However, Government of India through Department of Information Technolgoy (DIT) has taken initiatives at the national level to provide connectivity through Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

A Scheme "State Wide Area Network" (SWAN) , entitled to provide intra State/UT connectivity for each connected from the State/UT Hqrs. to Block Hqrs. with minimum 2 Mbps capacity per link for the entire country is in advanced stages of implementation in 28 States/ UTs and in 12 States/ UTs".

In addition, National Informatics Centre (NIC) an attached office of DIT has been providing NICNET connectivity upto district level using VSAT technology. NIC has connected all State capitals to NIC Hqr. at Delhi by optical fibre. The State capitals have been connected to districts through BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited) leased line and last mile connectivity beyond district is provided by using wirless connectivity/broadband/dial-up in some places and as required to enable Internet, e-mail, file transfer, database development, e-Governance applications development, hosting and access by Departments, States, UTs and District Administrations in the country. NICNET has capability to support Indian languages.

Complaint facility to BSNL subscribers

1812. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Miniser of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether BSNL subscribers of rural areas are not able to register their complaints every time their telephones are out of order; and

(b) if so, the manner in which the subscribers avail the facility of rental rebate on faulty telephones provided by BSNL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Sir, generally all the subscribers of BSNL including those in rural areas have an access to computerized fault booking service by dialing '198'.

In a few cases where this access is not available, the faults can be reported manually. Concerned BSNL staff send a regular report to the incharge of the exchange area for keeping accountability of fault clearance and duration.

(b) Report regarding telephones remaining faulty is taken periodically from the systems as indicated at (a) above and is sent to billing computer for granting rental rebate as per prevailing rules. In case a customer feels that he/she could not get rental rebate as per rules, he/she may make a representation to the concerned field officer and due rebate is granted to the customer after checking record of fault clearance from the particular Telephone Exchange.

Action against faulty phone companies

1813. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is contemplating to take action against phone companies for not fulfilling the conditions to set up network after getting licence as reported in the media;